Department of History
Promotion Guidelines

This document is an updated version of the set of guidelines that UCSD’s Department of History developed in 2017 following a process that involved an informal survey of promotion review standards and practices in other University of California History programs as well as peer institutions outside of the UC system.

NORMAL MERIT REVIEWS
In a normal merit review the History Department expects a continuing record of successful teaching and service as well as evidence of ongoing scholarly productivity in the form of articles, papers, edited collections and/or book chapters. We would normally expect 1-2 significant pieces of work for a two-year review period and 2-3 significant items for a 3 year review period, which could include: research articles in “A”, submitted research articles in “C”, and drafts of unpublished book chapters. The proportion of “A” and “C” items will shift over time, but the overarching expectation between major career reviews is ongoing publication of articles with evidence of continued progress on a book project. With the elimination of the “cross-over” steps, all merits will be “normal”. However, because we are in a book discipline, CAP has acknowledged that our published output will not necessarily be even over several review periods between books. For pre-tenure colleagues, we expect solid teaching of both lower- and upper-division courses but try to shield junior faculty from onerous service commitment both within the Department and the broader campus. For tenured faculty, the publication expectations remain the same but we also expect a solid record of teaching and service at the departmental, campus, and/or professional levels. We also take seriously candidates’ record in promoting principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the departmental, campus, and University levels.

FOURTH-YEAR ASSESSMENTS FOR UNTENURED FACULTY MEMBERS
In the History Department, we closely mentor pre-tenure faculty members before each review cycle and take special care to inform them about the importance of the fourth-year review and appraisal. The bulk of a fourth year appraisal hinges on the quality and state of the candidate’s first book manuscript, its development since the dissertation, and whether it is reasonable to expect that the book will be completed and accepted by a publisher within the next two years. In addition, we usually expect a published article or two, a solid record of teaching and at least some service at the department level.

PROMOTIONS FROM ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
For promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with tenure, the Department of History requires the completion of a monograph, which is normally a substantially revised version of the candidate’s dissertation. Specifically, promotion to tenure is predicated upon a book manuscript being accepted by a reputable press, as documented either by the publisher’s letter informing the author that no further revisions are necessary to proceed with publication, or by a final manuscript in production. In addition to the book, the Department would normally expect a few published articles and/or book chapters (2-3 depending on venue/scope) and signs of
professional visibility (fellowships, book reviews, scholarly conference papers, etc.). Finally, given the book-oriented focus of the discipline, we also require evidence of work toward realization of a second major project, which may include some combination of a prospectus, grant proposal, conference papers, and/or articles. For teaching and service, the Department expects the tenure candidate to have developed a variety of well-received course offerings (lower division and upper division lecture classes and graduate and/or undergraduate colloquia or seminars), and to have participated in two to three years of departmental- and/or campus service commitments. However, service expectations are kept to a minimum and Assistant Professors are not required to accept graduate students. Promotion plus acceleration of one step requires 5-6 articles, depending on venue/scope.

PROMOTION FROM ASSOCIATE TO FULL PROFESSOR AND STEP VI

The requirements for promotion to full professor and Professor Step VI include excellence in teaching, more substantial service than at the assistant level, and a continuing record of substantial publications in the field. The research criteria for promotions beyond the Assistant level are more flexible than those required for tenure, but this means that each candidate must be evaluated holistically on a case by case basis.

In recent years, the Department has generally followed the practice of requiring a monographic book for promotion from Associate to Full. The advantage of such a practice is that a monograph comprises a coherent and substantive original scholarly contribution that clearly meets the requirements for promotion. However, there are disadvantages to maintaining this as an exclusive practice. First, it does not recognize or encourage the variety of scholarly paths that constitute “high quality creative activity” in the historical field. Second, the length of time required to complete a monograph—10-12 years on average in the department—does not fit the university’s normative expectations of advancement beyond the Associate level.

To address these problems, the Department asserts the flexibility to define a variety of research and publication profiles that would meet the promotion requirement. Thus, in addition to the existing practice of a monographic book, the case for promotion could be made on the basis of a group of significant articles (5-7) that define a coherent and important scholarly contribution. Or, it could be made on the basis of a combination of articles, edited volumes, document collections or translations that demonstrate both quality productivity and an important presence in the field. Additionally, the case for promotion could be made with a smaller number of significant publications (2-3 major articles, an edited volume) if they are in addition to substantial progress on a monograph. “Substantial progress” would be documented by the submission of more than half of the planned book chapters. In all cases, it is the Department’s responsibility to make the reasonable case that the significance, the coherence and the substantive nature of the scholarly contribution justifies promotion.

PROMOTION TO ABOVE SCALE:

Promotion to Above Scale requires excellence in teaching, service and research as well as completion of another major research publication. This publication usually will consist of a third or fourth monograph, though the nature and quality of the continuing research agenda will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Promotions to Above Scale may also be made based on the completion of a coherent and important scholarly project resulting in a substantial and field defining edited volume.
or published work that makes a substantial contribution to public discourse. All promotions to above scale must demonstrate an international reputation, including a significant number of international referees and/or other evidence of status.

ACCELERATIONS:
Accelerations across two merit steps normally require double the amount of publications required for a single step, PLUS strong service and teaching. Double accelerations are viewed as extraordinary and generally require a book and 8-9 articles. Acceleration files with “weakness” in either of the other two areas will be denied. For an acceleration to or through a promotion, the case is slightly different in a book field like History. Instead of “twice” the normal productivity of two merit reviews, an acceleration to or through a promotion requires the productivity expected of a promotion (the book) plus that expected of an additional merit review period (several articles, depending on a 2 or 3 year cycle).

ABOVE SCALE MERITS:
In formal terms, there are no “merits” for above scale files, but at the four-year review cycle, we can request a 50% step, a 100% step, a 150% step or a 200% step. Accelerations at this level occur in “rare and compelling” cases and require not only extraordinary research productivity but also excellent service and teaching.